

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SINGAP 02368 300821Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 HA-05 EB-08 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 DODE-00 MCE-00 L-03 /044 W

-----010975 300824Z /12

P 300755Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0344

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 2368

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, SN, PORS

SUBJECT: DENIAL OF LICENSE FOR SALE OF POLICE EQUIPMENT TO SINGAPORE

REF: SINGAPORE 2169 AND PREVIOUS

1. FOREIGN MINISTRY PERMANENT SECRETARY CHIA CHEONG FOOK, MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR MAY 29, REQUESTED INFORMATION REGARDING REPORTED DENIAL BY DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES FOR SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUND. AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT HE HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF THESE CASES BUT WOULD INQUIRE OF DEPARTMENT. PERMSEC FOLLOWED UP WITH LETTER TO AMBASSADOR SAME DAY, REPEATING HIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION.

2. LICENSE DENIALS CITED BY PERMSEC ARE SEPARATE FROM DENIAL OF LICENSE FOR TEAR-GAS LAUNCHERS FOR SINGAPORE PRISON ADMINISTRATION (REFTELS) WHICH GOS HAS ALREADY INQUIRED ABOUT AT LOWER LEVEL. DETAILS OF THESE NEW CASES ARE AS FOLLOWS: LICENSE APPLICATIONS WERE SUBMITTED BY SMITH & WESSON INTERNATIONAL IN 1977 FOR EXPORT TO THE GETZ CORPORATION, SINGAPORE, OF (A) "ONE PEPPER FOG GENERATOR AND FORMULATION" AND (B) A QUANTITY OF "TEAR SMOKE AMMUNITION". ITEMS WERE FOR CONSIGNMENT TO THE SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE. AT LEAST TWO AND POSSIBLY THREE LICENSE APPLICATIONS APPARENTLY ARE INVOLVED. THE GETZ CORPORATION WAS INFORMED BY SMITH  
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& WESSON IN EARLY FEBRUARY 1978 THAT LICENSE APPLICATIONS HAD BEEN RETURNED "DISAPPROVED" BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE " ON GROUNDS OF HUMAN RIGHTS" BUT THAT COMPANY COULD REAPPLY IN 90 DAYS. IN SUBSEQUENT MESSAGE SENT BY SMITH & WESSON IN MID-FEBRUARY, COMPANY SAID IT HAD RECEIVED PERMISSION FROM DEPARTMENT TO REAPPLY IMMEDIATELY AND THAT IT WAS DOING SO.

3. FACT THAT THIS INQUIRY WAS MADE BY SENIOR-MOST CIVIL SERVANT IN FOREIGN MINISTRY RAISES MATTER TO POLITICAL LEVEL AND MAKES AN EARLY REPLY TO GOS INQUIRY NECESSARY. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S ADVICE SOONEST. AS WITH CASE CITED REFTELS, WE CAN SEE NO REASON FOR DENIAL OF THESE LICENSES ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS. ACQUISITION OF NON-LETHAL RIOT CONTROL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT BY SINGAPORE POLICE (GENERALLY RECOGNIZED TO BE MOST DISCIPLINED AND CORRUPTION-FREE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA) DOES NOT APPEAR IN ANY WAY INCONSISTENT WITH OUR HUMAN RIGHTS OBJECTIVES IN SINGAPORE; TO THE CONTRARY, IT WOULD PROBABLY HELP PROMOTE THEM.

4. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THESE REPEATED LICENSE DENIALS ARE LIKELY TO HAVE AN INCREASINGLY VISIBLE EFFECT ON U.S.-SINGAPORE RELATIONS, WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR DEPARTMENT TO INFORM US AT TIME SUCH ACTIONS ARE TAKEN RATHER THAN HAVING US LEARN OF THEM SEVERAL MONTHS LATER FROM SINGAPOREANS?  
HOLDRIDGE

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## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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